



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Date of Notice: July 27, 2006

PUBLIC NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

JO: 421772

The City of San Diego Land Development Review Division will prepare a draft Environmental Impact Report for the following project and is inviting your comments regarding the scope and content of the document. **Your comments must be received by August 25, 2006.** Please send your written comments to the following address: **Herbert Warren, Associate Planner, City of San Diego Development Services Center, 1222 First Avenue, MS 501, San Diego, CA 92101** or e-mail your comments to **DSDEAS@sanidiego.gov** with the Project Number (12031) in the subject line.

General Project Information:

- Project No. 12031, SCH No. Pending
- Community Plan Area: College Area
- Council District: 7(Madaffer)

Subject: ALVARADO ESTATES. Site Development Permit, Planned Development Permit, and Tentative Map to develop a 13.4-acre site. The proposal includes the construction of 6 residential units on 6 existing lots. The project would also require the approval of a MHPA Boundary Adjustment. The project site is undeveloped and located at 4700 Yerba Santa Drive north of Montezuma Road, south of Yerba Santa Drive, east of Fairmount Avenue, and west of Le Barron Road in the RS1-1 Zone within the College Area Community Plan. The site is not included on any Government Code Listing of hazardous waste sites.

Applicant: John Goddard, Rick Engineering.

Recommended Finding: The recommended finding that the project alternatives may have a significant effect on the environment is based on an Initial Study. The following issue areas that have been identified include: **Land Use; Landform Alteration/Visual Quality/Neighborhood Character; Hydrology/Water Quality; Geology; and Historical Resources.**

Availability in Alternative Format: To request the City's letter to the applicant detailing the required scope of work (EIR Scoping Letter) in alternative format, call the Development Services Department at (619) 446-5460 immediately to ensure availability. This information is ALSO available in alternative formats for persons with disabilities. To request this notice in alternative format, call (619) 446-5446 or (800) 735-2929 (TEXT TELEPHONE).

Additional Information: For environmental review information, contact Herbert Warren at (619) 446-5392. For information regarding public meetings/hearings on this project, contact the Project Manager, Patrick Hooper, at (619) 557-7992. This notice was published in the San Diego Transcript, and placed on the City of San Diego website (<http://clerkdoc.sannet.gov/Website/publicnotice/pubnotceqa.html>) and distributed on July 27, 2006.

Robert J. Manis, Assistant Deputy Director
Development Services Department



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

July 27, 2006

Mr. Gary Lambron
Owner
P.O. Box 15453
San Diego, CA 92175

Dear Mr. Lambron:

Subject: Scoping letter for an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Alvarado Estates
(PTS No. 12031)

The Environmental Analysis Section (EAS) of the Land Development Review Division (LDR) City of San Diego has conducted an initial study for the Alvarado Estates project. The 13.4-acre project site is undeveloped and located at 4700 Yerba Santa Drive in the RS-1-1 Zone within the College Area Community Plan. The proposed site also lies within the Multi-Habitat Planning Area and would impact Steep Hillside. The parcel was subdivided into six lots in 1951.

The site has six existing lots and the project proposes to revise the existing lots through the Tentative Map process. The proposed development must comply with the City of San Diego Land Development Code Regulations for General Development, Sensitive Biological Resources, and Steep Hillside (Environmentally Sensitive Lands). The proposed project would require a Site Development Permit (SDP) for proposed impacts to Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL). A Planned Development Permit (PDP) would be required for deviations. A Tentative Map (TM) would be required for the lot line revisions. An Easement Abandonment would also be required for the proposed development.

Based on the results of the initial study, it has been determined that the proposed project may have a significant effect on the environment. The preparation of a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is therefore required. This scoping letter is based on the project submittal received by the City on January 4, 2006. Future changes to the site plan, prior to release of the draft EIR, may affect the need to address the issues identified in this letter.

The purpose of this letter is to identify the issues to be specifically addressed in the EIR. The EIR should be prepared in accordance with the City's "Environmental Impact Report Guidelines" revised September 2002. The issues to be addressed are discussed below. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) will be distributed to Responsible Agencies and others who may have an interest in the project. Consequently, changes or additions to this scope of work may be required as a result of input received in response to the NOP.



Development Services

1222 First Avenue, MS 501 • San Diego, CA 92101-4155
Tel (619) 446-5460

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Discuss the characteristics, goals and objects of the project. Describe all discretionary actions associated with the project and list all permits required from other federal, state, and local agencies. Describe major project features, including any off-site improvements that may be associated with the proposed project. Describe in detail the environmental setting of the proposed project, including existing and planned land uses in the vicinity.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

The Draft EIR should describe the precise location of the project and present it on a detailed topographical map and a regional map. Provide a local and regional description of the environmental setting of the project, as well as the zoning and land use designations of the site and its contiguous properties, area topography, drainage characteristics and vegetation. Include any applicable land use plans/overlay zones that affect the project site such as the College Area Community Plan, the City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP) Subarea Plan and associated Multi-Habitat Planning Area. A description of other utilities that may be present on or in close proximity to the site and their maintenance accesses should be discussed as well. Also, include information on public services (i.e. police, fire, and emergency medical) that would serve this development.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Identify a reasonable range of mitigation measures and/or alternatives, whether proposed or not, for each identified potential significant impact. Where the plan does not address the issue, analyze project impacts in terms of reasonable foreseeable "worst case" scenarios. Additional plan language and/or acceptance of mitigation measures may change the need to use this type of analysis.

Significance determinations made in the EIR should reflect the fact that CEQA does not permit deferral of the establishment of mitigation measures and that an impact should be considered significant if it cannot be demonstrated with certainty that it is not (i.e., if a significant impact "may" result).

A. LAND USE

Issues: Would the proposed project implement or result in a conflict with the goals, objects, and recommendations of the City of San Diego Progressive Guide and General Plan, and the College Area Community Plan? How is the proposed project consistent with the land use designation, intensity of development, and environmental goals of these plans? Would the proposed project result in a conflict with the purpose and intent of the Environmentally Sensitive Lands (ESL) regulations of the City of San Diego Land Development Code (LDC)?

The project is located within the College Area Community Plan, west of Barron Road, east of Fairmont Avenue, north of Montezuma Road, and south of Yerba Santa Drive. Some portions of the proposed project site encroach into the MHPA, which may require an MHPA boundary adjustment and/or correction. The EIR should systematically identify all relevant goals, objective and recommendations within any plans/ordinances that pertain to the project and analyze whether implementation would be consistent with them. Specifically, discuss the project's conformance with the College Area Community Plan elements, the project's consistency with the Progress Guide and General Plan and the project's conformance with the Environmentally Sensitive Lands regulations.

The EIR should also evaluate the project's conformance with the MSCP Land Use Adjacency Guidelines (Section 1.4.3) in terms of land use, drainage, toxic substances in runoff, lighting, noise, invasive plant species, and brush management requirements for the portions of the proposed development in or adjacent to the MHPA. A description of measures proposed to reduce any identified MHPA adverse edge effects should be included in this section also.

B. GEOLOGY/SOILS

Issues: What is the nature of the earthwork that would be required to adequately support the proposed structures? Would the proposal result in any increase in wind or water erosion of soils either on- or off-site? Would the proposed project expose people or property to geologic hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, liquefaction, ground failure, or similar hazards?

According to the City of San Diego Seismic Safety Study, the project site is located within Geologic Hazard Zone 53 which is characterized by level or sloping terrain, unfavorable geologic structure, low to moderate risk.

Describe the geologic and subsurface conditions in the project area. Describe the project setting in terms of existing topography, geology (surface and subsurface), tectonics, and soil types. Assess potential impacts to the project from geologic hazards and unfavorable soil conditions. Discuss excavation of unsuitable soils including impacts related to filling of an on-site finger canyon and removing soils from the site from off-site storage, use, and/or disposal. Discuss and provide mitigation as appropriate that would reduce the potential for future adverse impacts resulting from on-site soils and geologic hazards.

During construction, the project would require substantial quantities of cut and fill as well as the creation of manufactured slopes during grading

operations. Discuss in detail the type and amount of grading that would be required for this project, and any potential impacts that may result from grading activities. Including impacts related to filling of a finger canyon and removing soils from the site for off-site storage, use, and/or disposal.

C. HYDROLOGY/WATER QUALITY

Issues: Would the proposal result in a discharge into surface or ground waters or in any alteration of surface or groundwater quality, including, but not limited to, temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, gas, oil, or other noxious chemicals? How would the proposed project impact existing drainage patterns? Would these modifications result in direct or cumulative impacts related to increase flooding? What types of 'Best Management Practices' (BMPs) would be incorporated into the project's Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) to avoid impacts to the storm water system?

The project would require grading of the lots for the proposed development. Describe how this project would impact the issues listed above and include proposals for mitigation measures through the development of construction and post-construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) as part of the required Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) in conformance with City of San Diego Stormwater Regulations.

D. HISTORIC AND PREHISTORIC RESOURCES

Issues: Would the proposed project result in an alteration, including advent physical or aesthetic effects and/or the destruction of a prehistoric or historic building, structure, object, or site?

The project site is located within one mile of recorded archaeological sites and within the hatched marks of the City of San Diego's Historical Resources Map. The EIR should disclose if any archaeological surveys have been prepared for the project site, and an analysis of the survey results. If it is determined that the proposed project might impact potentially sensitive archaeological resources, mitigation in the form of an archaeological monitoring program would be required.

E. LANDFORM ALTERATIONS/VISUAL QUALITY/NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER

Issues: Would the proposal result in the creation of a negative aesthetic site or project? Would the project include bulk, scale, materials, or style

that would be incompatible with surrounding development? Would the project result in substantial alteration to the existing character of the area? Would the proposed project result in the loss, covering, or modification of any unique physical features such as a natural canyon or hillside slope in excess of 25 percent gradient?

The EIR should include an evaluation of the impacts on the natural landforms within the project boundary due to the proposed grading, and include the grading quantities (cut and fill) as well as the height of the proposed manufactured slopes. According to the City of San Diego's Significance Determination Guidelines for CEQA Review, the proposed project could potentially create visual impacts in relation to landform alterations. The guidelines include the following in determining landform visual impacts: altering more than 2,000 cubic yards of earth per graded acre; creating manufactured slopes higher than ten feet or steeper than 2:1 (50 percent); or changing the elevation of steep natural slopes (25 percent gradient or steeper) from existing grade to a proposed grade of more than 5 feet by either excavation or fill. The proposed project would grade approximately 101,000 cubic yards of earth material on 29 percent of the total site, and would create manufactured slopes of up to and in some areas over, 50 feet in height. These grading features would constitute significant landform alterations.

Although the potential visual impacts of this project on private views are not required to be evaluated per CEQA Guidelines, this condition should be referenced within the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) as a matter of public disclosure. Regarding public view blockages, the EIR should discuss the following: would project implementation cause a substantial view blockage of a public resource (such as a mountain that is considered significant by the applicable College Area Community Plan); causing a view blockage that would be considered extensive when the overall scenic quality of a resource is changed, for example, from an essential natural view to a largely man-made appearance.

Due to the pending visual conditions with this project, a visual simulation and analysis should be included in the DEIR. During preparation of this simulation/analysis, EAS suggests that the applicant incorporate sensitive grading techniques in the project which allow for manufactured slopes to blend in with natural slopes on-site, by imitating the existing landforms, contouring slope faces, and contouring the tops and toes of all slope edges. It should also include any landscape features within the project design which may soften the topography. Overall, the analysis should place an emphasis on how project grading in its final form will appear to viewers from adjacent streets and from public viewing areas within the City of San Diego. The EIR should contain a

visual analysis of any potential impacts to visual quality resulting from landform alterations on-site that would be viewed by public uses within the City of San Diego, such as views from Montezuma Road, Fairmount Avenue, and Yerba Santa Drive and any hiking or biking trails that may be identified on the proposed site. This can be achieved by visual simulations of views of the landforms from various key viewing points.

Key areas to be evaluated should include grading within 25 percent or steeper slopes and areas of extensive grading (excessive artificial slope heights, filling of canyons, etc.). The evaluation should identify and quantify encroachments into natural slopes with gradients greater than 25% and discuss them relative to the City's Steep Hillside Guidelines and Environmentally Sensitive Lands Regulations. A description of all proposed structures should also be included within this section of the document in terms of their building mass, bulk, height, and architectural style.

F. PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Issues: Would the project Impact potentially significant paleontological resources?

According to the *Geology of the San Diego Metropolitan Area, California* (Kennedy 1975), published by the California Division of Mines and Geology, the project site is underlain by the Mission Valley formation which has a high resource sensitivity to contain paleontological resources. Since the project proposes grading in excess of 10 feet in depth and 1,000 cubic yards, paleontological resources may be impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, paleontological monitoring would be required during grading and excavation operations. The EIR should discuss the site's geologic composition as it relates to fossiliferous potential and include paleontological monitoring as a mitigation measure.

G. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Issues: Would the proposed project result in a reduction in the number of any unique, rare, endangered, sensitive, or fully protected species of plants or animals?

Would the proposed project result in the introduction of invasive species of plants into the area? Would the proposed project result in interference with the nesting/foraging/movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species? Would the proposed project result in an impact to a sensitive habitat, including, but not limited to stream-side vegetation,

oak woodland, vernal pools, lagoon, wetland, or coastal sage scrub or chaparral? Would the proposal affect the long-term conservation of biological resources as described in the MSCP or any other local, regional or state conservation plans?

Upland and wetland vegetation and sensitive wildlife would potentially be directly or indirectly affected by project implementation, and must be fully discussed this section of the EIR. Approximately 13.4 acres of sensitive biological habitat could potentially be impacted by project development.

Before a definitive determination of impact to these resources can be made, and to what level of significance, an identification and quantification of biological resources must be established for the site. A biological resources survey and report is, therefore, required for the project, which must be prepared in accordance with the City of San Diego's Biological Review References (July 2002). When quantifying biological impacts, Zone 2 Brush Management is considered "impact neutral" and should not be included as part of the impacted area. It is also advisable for the applicant to confer with the appropriate federal and state resource agencies to determine their separate and specific permitting requirements for the project, if any.

A discussion and quantification of all impacts to identifiable wetland habitat must be addressed within this section of the EIR. The wetland habitat types should be graphically delineated, including an adequate buffer to sustain their functionality. If impacts to any wetlands or their buffers are identified, a discussion of the infeasibility of avoiding such impacts with the project should be included.

Some encroachment into the City's MHPA would occur with the current project proposal for remedial grading purposes. Both the biological report and the Biological Resources section of the EIR should also provide a detailed discussion and mapping of any proposed MHPA boundary adjustments or corrections, and should include a functional equivalency analysis of any habitat areas proposed to be added to the MHPA, in accordance with the MSCP Subarea Plan.

IV. SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

- A. In accordance with CEQA Section 15127, the EIR must include a discussion of the following issue areas:
1. Any significant irreversible environmental changes which would be involved in the proposed action should it be implemented;

2. Growth-inducing impacts of the proposed action; and
3. Effects not found to be significant.

V. GROWTH INDUCEMENT

The EIR should address the potential for growth inducement through implementation of the proposed project. The document should discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or construction of additional housing either directly or indirectly. Accelerated growth could further strain existing community facilities or encourage activities that could significantly affect the environment. This section need not conclude that growth-inducing impacts, if any, are significant unless the project would induce substantial growth or concentration of population.

VI. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

When this project is considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the College Area Community Plan area, the bordering Navajo/Del Cerro Community Plan area, and Mid-City Community Plan area, the proposed project could result in significant environmental changes that are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. Therefore, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15130, potential cumulative impacts should be discussed in a separate section of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). This section should include all existing and pending development proposals, including those undergoing review with the Development Services Department. Include a discussion of potential cumulative impacts to landform alteration/visual quality, transportation/circulation and air quality.

VII. ALTERNATIVES

The EIR should place a major emphasis on reasonable alternatives that avoid or mitigate the project's significant impacts while achieving the project goals and objectives. These alternatives should be identified and discussed in detail and should address all significant impacts. The alternatives analysis should be conducted in sufficient graphic and narrative detail to clearly assess the relative level of impacts and feasibility. In addition, include a discussion of alternatives that were considered and determined to not be feasible. At a minimum, the following alternatives should be considered:

A. NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative should address the feasibility of retaining the site in its current state. The EIR should discuss impacts resulting from the proposed project which would be avoided under this alternative.

B. DEVELOPMENT OF SIX EXISTING LOTS

Develop the site using the existing lot configuration and access. This alternative would be a six lot, six single family development in a configuration different than that proposed within this tentative map application.

C. REDUCED GRADING ALTERNATIVE

The Reduced Grading Alternative would consider similar and/or a reduction in the number of lots than that of the original proposal, along with reducing the amount of proposed earthwork along the points of greatest potential adverse impacts. This alternative would consider a reduction in the project's developable footprint and incorporate a grading design that would conform more closely to natural land contours. This alternative would focus on the existing landform and natural features in its design to reduce the total grading on-site. The EIR should discuss any reduction of impacts as a result of this alternative especially on the issues of land use and, landform alteration/visual quality.

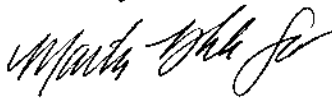
If, through the environmental analysis, other alternatives become apparent which would mitigate potential impacts, these should be discussed with EAS staff prior to including them in the EIR. It is important to emphasize that the alternatives section of the EIR should constitute a major part of the report. The timely processing of the environmental review will likely be dependent on the thoroughness of effort exhibited in the alternative analysis.

Based on the issue identified in this scoping letter, it may be possible to avoid and or reduce all significant impacts to acceptable levels through project redesign and agreement on what constitutes adequate mitigation. If this can be accomplished, an EIR may not be necessary. However, in the event that such agreement cannot be reached, then the EIR should be prepared in draft form by a consultant of your choice, based on the scope of work determined by this office. It is important to note that timely processing of your project will be contingent in large part on your selection of a well-qualified consultant. Prior to starting work on the EIR, a meeting between the consultant and EAS will be required to discuss and clarify the scope of work.

If a screen check draft EIR is not submitted to EAS for review within 30 days of the date of this letter, the application processing timeline will be held in abeyance until the report has been provided.

Actual cost of the EIR work on your project will be accounted for against your deposit, and the account must maintain a positive balance to allow City staff to continue project reviews. Should you have any questions related to the account, please contact the Development Project Manager, Patrick Hooper at (619) 557-7992. Should you have any questions regarding this letter or the environmental review of the project, please contact the environmental analyst, Herb Warren at (619) 446-5392.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Manis
Assistant Deputy Director
Development Services Department

Attachments: Figure 1: Location Map
Figure 2: Site Plan

Distribution:

Federal Government
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services (23)

State Government
California Department of Fish and Games (32)
Regional Water Quality Control Board (44)
State Clearinghouse (57)

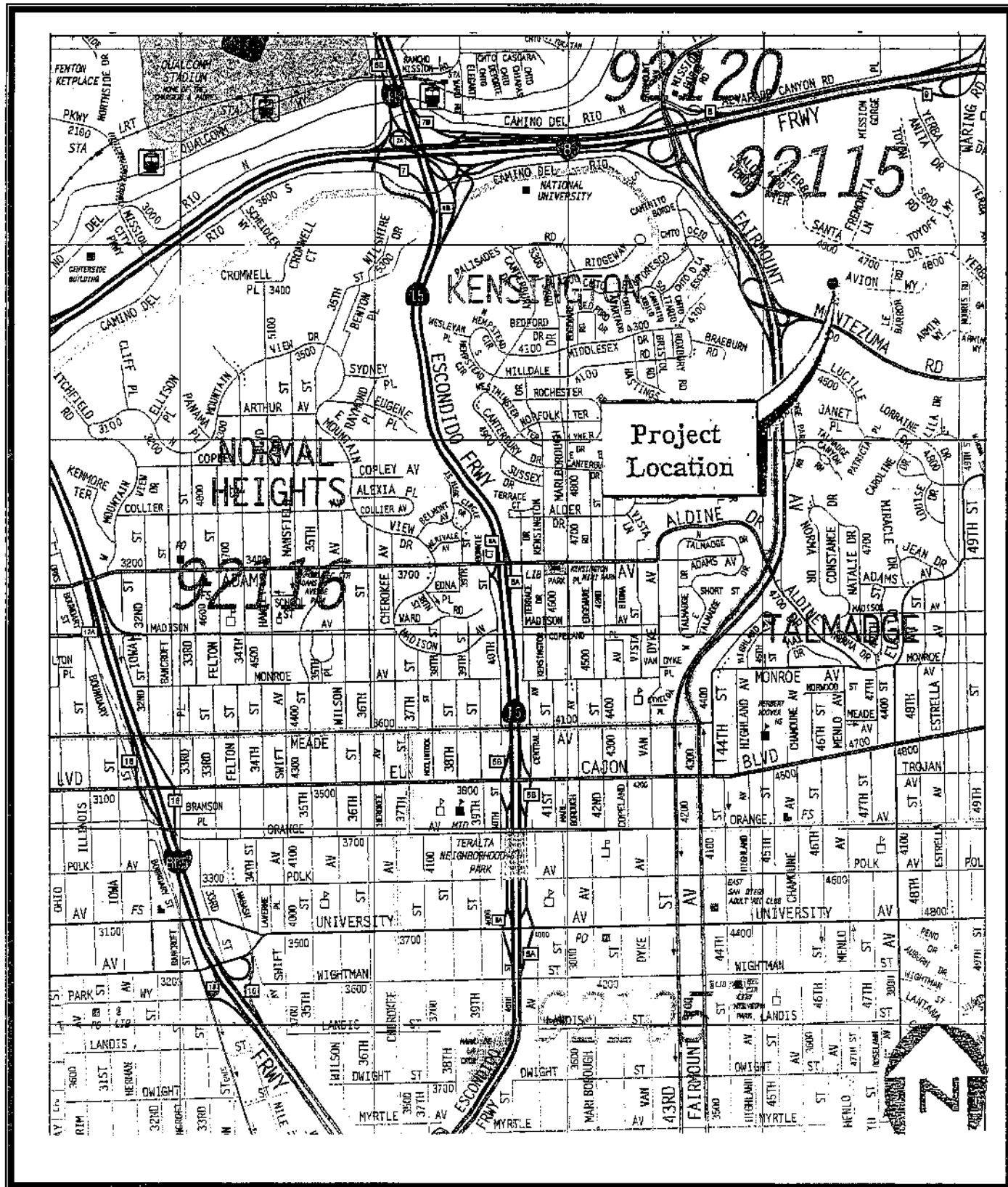
County of San Diego
Department of Planning and Land Use

City of San Diego
Councilmember Madaffer, District 7 (MS 10A)
Development Services Department (MS 501)
Patrick Hooper, Development Project Manager
Ann Gonsalves, Transportation Development
Marlon Pangilinan, Planning Department
Jeanne Krosch, Planning MSCP
Martha Blake, Development Services Department
Julius Ocen, Engineering Review
Jeff Harkness, Parks and Open Space Review

Alice Vaughn, Water Review
Nathaniel Eady, Landscape Review
Patrick Thomas, Geology Review
Janet King, Wastewater Review
Environmental Services Department (93A)

Other

College Area Community Council (456)
Rick Engineering
Mr. Gary Lambron
Marcia Gross
Historical Resources Board (87)
Carmen Lucas (206)
Jerry Schaefer PHD (209)
South Coastal Information Center (210)
San Diego Historical Society (211)
San Diego Archaeological Center (212)
San Diego Natural History Museum (213)
Save Our Heritage Organization (214)
Ron Christman (215)
Louie Guassac (215A)
San Diego Archaeological Society Inc EIR Review Committee (218)
Cabrillo Historical Association (220)
Kumeyaay Cultural Repatriation Committee (225)
Acquisition Department SDSU Library (224)
Native American Distribution (225A-R)
Sierra Club (165)
California Native Plant Society (170)
Audubon Society (167)
Center for Biological Diversity (176)
Endangered Habitat League (182)
San Diego Natural History Museum (166)



Alvarado Estates



Location Map

Environmental Analysis Section - Project No. 12031

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Figure

1



Figure 2

